

acceptor. Processor 332 can operate instructions that require a player to deposit a certain amount of money in order to start the game.

[0045] Although the processing system shown in FIG. 2C is one specific processing system, it is by no means the only processing system architecture on which embodiments described herein can be implemented. Regardless of the processing system configuration, it may employ one or more memories or memory modules configured to store program instructions for gaming machine network operations and operations associated with layered display systems described herein. Such memory or memories may also be configured to store player interactions, player interaction information, and other instructions related to steps described herein, instructions for one or more games played on the gaming machine, etc.

[0046] Because such information and program instructions may be employed to implement the systems/methods described herein, the present invention relates to machine-readable media that include program instructions, state information, etc. for performing various operations described herein. Examples of machine-readable media include, but are not limited to, magnetic media such as hard disks, floppy disks, and magnetic tape; optical media such as CD-ROM disks; magneto-optical media such as floptical disks; and hardware devices that are specially configured to store and perform program instructions, such as read-only memory devices (ROM) and random access memory (RAM). The invention may also be embodied in a carrier wave traveling over an appropriate medium such as airwaves, optical lines, electric lines, etc. Examples of program instructions include both machine code, such as produced by a compiler, and files containing higher-level code that may be executed by the computer using an interpreter.

[0047] The processing system may offer any type of primary game, bonus round game or other game. In one embodiment, a gaming machine permits a player to play two or more games on two or more display screens at the same time or at different times. For example, a player can play two related games on two of the display screens simultaneously. In another example, once a player deposits currency to initiate the gaming device, the gaming machine allows a person to choose from one or more games to play on different display screens. In yet another example, the gaming device can include a multi-level bonus scheme that allows a player to advance to different bonus rounds that are displayed and played on different display screens.

[0048] Also, as noted above, a wide variety of devices can be used with the disclosed specialized multi-layer displays and systems, and such devices are not limited to gaming machines. While such gaming machines will be further described with respect to a gaming network or system, it will be readily appreciated that alternative devices having multi-layer displays may also be included in a similar network or system.

General Gaming Network And System Configurations

[0049] Continuing with FIG. 3, an exemplary network infrastructure for providing a gaming system having one or more gaming machines is illustrated in block diagram format. Exemplary gaming system 50 has one or more gaming machines, various communication items, and a number of host-side components and devices adapted for use within a gaming environment. As shown, one or more gaming

machines 10 adapted for use in gaming system 50 can be in a plurality of locations, such as in banks on a casino floor or standing alone at a smaller non-gaming establishment, as desired. Common bus 51 can connect one or more gaming machines or devices to a number of networked devices on the gaming system 50, such as, for example, a general-purpose server 60, one or more special-purpose servers 61, a sub-network of peripheral devices 80, and/or a database 70.

[0050] A general-purpose server 60 may be one that is already present within a casino or other establishment for one or more other purposes beyond any monitoring or administering involving gaming machines. Functions for such a general-purpose server can include other general and game specific accounting functions, payroll functions, general Internet and e-mail capabilities, switchboard communications, and reservations and other hotel and restaurant operations, as well as other assorted general establishment record keeping and operations. In some cases, specific gaming related functions such as cashless gaming, downloadable gaming, player tracking, remote game administration, video or other visual data transmission, or other types of functions may also be associated with or performed by such a general-purpose server. For example, such a server may contain various programs related to cashless gaming administration, player tracking operations, specific player account administration, remote game play administration, remote game player verification, remote gaming administration, downloadable gaming administration, and/or visual image or video data storage, transfer and distribution, and may also be linked to one or more gaming machines, in some cases forming a network that includes all or many of the gaming devices and/or machines within the establishment. Communications can then be exchanged from each adapted gaming machine to one or more related programs or modules on the general-purpose server.

[0051] In one embodiment, gaming system 50 contains one or more special-purpose servers that can be used for various functions relating to the provision of gaming machine administration and operation under the present methods and systems. Such a special-purpose server or servers could include, for example, a cashless gaming server, a player verification server, a general game server, a downloadable games server, a specialized accounting server, and/or a visual image or video distribution server, among others. Of course, these functions may all be combined onto a single specialized server. Such additional special-purpose servers are desirable for a variety of reasons, such as, for example, to lessen the burden on an existing general-purpose server or to isolate or wall off some or all gaming machine administration and operations data and functions from the general-purpose server and thereby increase security and limit the possible modes of access to such operations and information.

[0052] Alternatively, exemplary gaming system 50 can be isolated from any other network at the establishment, such that a general-purpose server 60 is essentially impractical and unnecessary. Under either embodiment of an isolated or shared network, one or more of the special-purpose servers are preferably connected to sub-network 80, which might be, for example, a cashier station or terminal. Peripheral devices in this sub-network may include, for example, one or more displays 81, one or more user terminals 82, one or more printers 83, and one or more other input devices 84, such as a ticket validator or other security identifier, among others. Similarly, under either embodiment of an isolated or shared network, at least the specialized server 61 or another similar